

The H1N1 Flu

WHAT IS THE H1N1 FLU?

H1N1 (referred to as "swine flu" early on) is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. This new virus was first detected in people in the United States in April 2009. Other countries, including Mexico and Canada, have reported people sick with this new virus. This virus is spreading from person-to-person, probably in much the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

The symptoms of this illness in people are similar to the symptoms of regular human flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with swine flu. In the past, severe illness (pneumonia and respiratory failure) and deaths have been reported. Like seasonal flu, swine flu may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.

HOW DOES H1N1 SPREAD?

Spread of the H1N1 Influenza A virus is believed to be happening in the same way that seasonal flu spreads -- mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

HOW CAN SOMEONE INFECTED WITH THE H1N1 FLU INFECT SOMEONE ELSE?

Infected

people may be able to infect others beginning one day before symptoms develop and up to seven or more days after becoming sick. That means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.

WHO IS AFFECTED?

Anyone can catch H1N1, but it is especially dangerous for folks with underlying medical conditions, such as asthma or diabetes, or if you're pregnant. It's been most contagious among children and young adults, age six months to 24 years old. With the approaching flu season and the beginning of the school year, it's especially important to be on guard.

WHAT CAN I DO?

There are basic actions everyone can do to help stop the spread of H1N1 flu. They include:

- washing your hands with soap and water

- coughing into your sleeve or a tissue, instead of your hands
- stay at home if you're feeling sick
- get your seasonal flu shot

KNOW THE FACTS

There are many resources on the internet for you to find out about H1N1, how to prevent it, and how it affects your community. Please check out the following sites for more information.

The Georgia Department of Public Health - H1N1 Influenza Information

The Georgia Department of Education - H1N1 Resources and News

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - H1N1 Resources

You can also call 1-800-CDC-INFO for more information.

www.flu.gov - The United States Department of Health and Human Services Flu Website